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NEWS

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Yukon Government Supports S.S. Tutshi Memorial

WHITEHORSE - Renovation and stabilization work to the S.S. Tutshi in Carcross will result in a proper memorial to this important local icon, announced Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor.

Known as the "Queen" of the British Yukon Navigation Company's fleet when she was first launched in 1917, the S.S. Tutshi underwent three expansions to its structure to accommodate the growing Edwardian tourist trade between 1920 and 1926 in the Southern Lakes region. Changing markets and new technology related to visitor travel resulted in her last trip in 1956 when she was pulled from the water and abandoned until the Yukon government purchased the vessel in 1972. Restoration work began in the 1980s and was nearing completion when fire destroyed much of the vessel in 1990.

"The S.S. Tutshi memorial will pay tribute to an important piece of local and tourism history that speaks to the sternwheelers and waterway legacies of an earlier era," Taylor said. "The Yukon government is committed to ensuring that Yukon's heritage resources are preserved and celebrated not only today, but in future generations, as well."

The public tender for the S.S. Tutshi memorial project includes renovations and stabilization of the vessel, and development of the site as a multi-use space for interpretation, community

events and programming. This project will also help to ensure that the existing large mechanical artifacts are preserved on site.

"As a heritage attraction, the site will offer opportunities for the community to come together in the spirit of cooperation and friendship," Mark Wedge, Kha Shade Heni Carcross Tagish First Nation said. "Through the years, many Carcross residents have worked on the Tutshi, and it has great symbolic meaning for all residents of the community. We look forward to the awarding of the contract that will help to advance the tourism infrastructure of Carcross."

"We have many residents in Carcross who hold deep emotional ties to the Tutshi," Linda Pringle, Chair South Klondike Local Advisory Council said. "The conceptual design work developed in conjunction with the Yukon Government's Department of Tourism and Culture significantly supports development along the waterfront in Carcross that is integral to the wellbeing of the community. Speaking for the local advisory council, we are very pleased to see this important project moving forward."

The S.S. Tutshi memorial will further the goals and aspirations of the Destination Carcross MOU between the Yukon government, Carcross Tagish First Nation and White Pass and Yukon Route Railway. It will complement the many other capital projects taking place in Carcross that will help to reinforce the community as a "must see" on any visitors' travel itinerary, while at the same time developing a community resource.

For information on the Government of Yukon public tender for the S.S. Tutshi memorial, contact Contract Services at 867-667-5385.

View drawings of schematics at **http://www.gov.yk.ca/tenders/public/1263.html**

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The S.S. Tutshi as she looks today. The restoration work will see the vessel regain some of its stately status when she was known as one of the larger boats traveling Yukon's waterways. With a crew of 29 she could carry 135 first class passengers. Built primarily as a first-class excursion vessel, she did carry freight that consisted of mail and groceries, making her a much loved vessel to the locals who relied on her travels throughout the Southern Lakes.